

PLACER COUNTY AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT

STATEMENT REGARDING NATURALLY OCCURRING ASBESTOS

March 30, 2005

Naturally occurring asbestos, often found in serpentine rock formations, is present in several foothill areas of Placer County. The deleterious effects on health of inhaling or ingesting asbestos fibers are well known. The Placer County Air Pollution Control District (District), believes that the best and most effective approach to minimizing and preventing impacts from naturally occurring asbestos is a proactive program that seeks to minimize and control soil disturbance and thereby limit the release of fine particulate matter, including any asbestos fibers that may be present, into the air. This approach is one that is endorsed by the State Air Resources Board through the State's adoption of regulations that the District enforces to control and manage dust from construction, surfacing, and mining operations in areas where naturally occurring asbestos may be present. Among the steps taken independently by the District is the adoption of a local dust control regulation that is one of the most stringent in the state. This local regulation goes beyond the state's measures by providing standards for the control of sources of fugitive dust, including dust from construction activities, and is not limited in applicability to areas where naturally occurring asbestos is found. The District has also enhanced its presence in the field by adding staff to conduct patrols throughout the County for dust violations and to visit construction sites. The District has conducted outreach concerning naturally occurring asbestos with land use agencies and residents, and seeks to do more in this area. Among these efforts has been the development of an informational brochure for homeowners and renters, and a contract with the California Geological Survey of the Department of Conservation to develop improved maps of potential naturally occurring asbestos areas in Placer County to aid the public in identifying these areas and taking precautions.

The District has closely followed the identification of concerns about naturally occurring asbestos in El Dorado County and the work conducted by EPA. This work is of interest because events and findings in El Dorado County may translate to potential concerns in any similar area where naturally occurring asbestos is located. Any new concerns that are raised by results from EPA testing in El Dorado County will be evaluated to determine whether District programs should be modified or enhanced in light of the results. In addition the District will work closely with the Air Resources Board, EPA, air districts, and other public entities to communicate the results to the public in an understandable manner.